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Governor touts new video-employment information program

AUSTIN (AP) — People around Texas will be able to get state employment information at shopping malls and grocery stores through touch-activated video screens in a pilot program that's being touted by Gov. Ann Richards.

The Texas Employment Commission and California-based North Communications plan to put in 50 kiosks with screens over the next three months. Fifteen will be placed in the next few days in Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Houston, McAllen, Port Arthur and Tyler.

"Info-Texas will help connect Texans who are still looking for work to the jobs that can make a difference to them and to their families and to our economy," Richards said Tuesday.

The kiosks — which combine elements of the computer, television and automated teller machines — use video and graphics to provide TEC information and services. They can be used in Spanish or English.

For example, people can search a current list of state agency employment opportunities and get in-

formation about unemployment benefits, worker re-training and child labor laws.

The company in the future plans to expand the services offered. Anglers, for example, could buy fishing licenses by inserting a credit card, while job-seekers could register their skills and interests in a job-matching system.

Texas is the seventh state gov-

ernment to use kiosks from North Communications, which designed the computer software and network and is responsible for their ongoing maintenance and operations.

Officials said the network has

cost the state nothing in initial capital expense. The state will use a federal grant to pay for the program at a cost of \$1.50 to \$3.50 each time a person uses the machine, according to commission administrator Bill Grossenbacher.

EXHIBIT

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